***Ritual, Symbol and Behavior*** Dr. Misha Quill

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| ANT 308  Cornell College  Block 5 2019 |  | [mquill@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:mquill@cornellcollege.edu)  Office: 206 College  Office hours by appointment  Campus phone: x4841 |

Course Description:

People everywhere engage in rituals, some simple, others complex, some secular, others religious or spiritual. Why? In this course, we will examine the role of ritual in our social behavior and explore the ways these individual and collective experiences reflect distinct social values, power structures and modes of subjectivity. We will also consider ways that ritual helps us understand the production and reproduction of culture.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES & SKILLS:**

This course aims to:

* Familiarize students with the diverse nature of human societies and cultures around the world.
* Help students develop critical thinking skills in order to appreciate the social, economic and political roots of cultural diversity within a historical context.
* Enable students to recognize the value of anthropology in understanding complex social phenomena.
* Demonstrate how to break down complex academic journal articles into thesis, main points, and supporting evidence.
* Using ethnographies, help students identify the kinds of data anthropologists rely on and in what way they these data to make claims and build arguments.

*The course supports the Educational Priorities and Outcomes of Cornell College with emphasis on knowledge, inquiry, communication, ethical behavior and intercultural literacy.*

**Required texts:**

* Bell, Catherine M. 2009. *Ritual : Perspectives and Dimensions*. Oxford: Oxford University

Press.

* Douglas, Mary. 2003. *Purity and Danger : An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. Routledge Classics. London: Routledge
* Other articles as assigned (on Moodle).

Evaluation Criteria

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| Campus interview (and fieldnotes) | 15 |  | Course Participation | 40 |
| MLK Day observance response | 15 |  | Reflection paper (either Holocaust Rememberence or Naturalization Ceremony) | 20 |
| Short paper on worship observance | 20 |  | Lead class discussion with a partner | 10 |
| Short applied theory paper (Sontag or film) | 20 |  | Final paper | 30 |
|  |  |  | **Total points** | **170** |

***Grade Scale*** I use the following grading scale:

A = 93-99 A- = 90-92 B+ = 87-89 B = 83-86 B- = 80-82 C+ =77-79

C = 73-76 C- = 70-72 D+ = 67-69 D = 63-66 D- = 60-62 F 59 and below

Course Schedule – Subject to Change

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|  |  | **Class time** | **Class** | **Reading** | **Assignment due?** |
| 1/14/2019 | Mon | 9-10; 1-3 | Introductions | No reading |  |
| 1/15/2019 | Tue | 12:30-3 | What is ritual? | Bell Ch 1; Stein and Stein (Moodle) |  |
| 1/16/2019 | Wed | 9-11; 1-3 | Theorizing ritual and society | Bell Ch 2; Durkheim (Moodle) |  |
| 1/17/2019 | Thu | 12:30-3 | Genres of Ritual action | Bell Ch 4; |  |
| 1/18/2019 | Fri | 9-11 | Ritually constructing one's place | Turner (Moodle)  Conklin (Moodle) | Campus interview reflection and field notes (Due 1/18 at 9PM). |
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| 1/21/2019 | Mon | No class – but as a class, most of us will travel to Iowa City for MLK Day of Service. Van will leave from behind Thomas Commons at 8AM.  The assignment is to attend at least one MLK Day celebration event, participate, observe and take notes. [https://www.aclu-ia.org/en/mlk-day-iowa-events-2019. Read Bell Ch 5](https://www.aclu-ia.org/en/mlk-day-iowa-events-2019.%20Read%20Bell%20Ch%205) and Rappaport (Moodle) to identify which aspects of these categories of ritual apply to the activities you observe. | | | |
| 1/22/2019 | Tue | 12:30-3 | Categories of Ritual,Power and Meaning | Goffman (Moodle)  Bell Ch 6; | MLK Day observance reflection (Due 1/22 at 6PM) |
| 1/23/2019 | Wed | 9-11; 1-3 | Connecting language, symbolic thought and ritual | Bell Ch 3; Lakoff (Moodle) |  |
| 1/24/2019 | Thu | 12:30-3 | Peyote Ritual | Myerhoff (Moodle) |  |
| 1/25/2019 | Fri | 9:30-11; 1230-3 | Ritual as performance, ritual as memory | Robben x 2 (Moodle); | Short applied theory paper (Sontag or film) (Due 1/25 at 9AM) |
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| 1/28/2019 | Mon | 9:30-12 | Cultural systems/ uncleanliness | Geertz (Moodle); Douglas Ch 1 | Short reflection paper Holocaust Remembrance or Naturalization Ceremony- (Due 1/28 at noon) |
| 1/29/2019 | Tue | 12:30-3 | Key Symbols | Ortner (Moodle); Douglas Ch 2-3 |  |
| 1/30/2019 | Wed | 9-11; 1-3 | Cosmology and Magic | Douglas Ch 6-7; Gell (Moodle) | Final paper draft due on Moodle |
| 1/31/2019 | Thu | 12:30-3 | Signs and Symbols | Langer (Moodle); Douglas Ch 9 |  |
| 2/1/2019 | Fri | 9-11 |  | No reading (in class workshop) | Please bring 2 copies of paper draft to class |
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| 2/4/2019 | Mon | 12:30-3 | Symbolic action, endings and beginnings | Leinhardt (Moodle); Douglas Ch 10 | Worship observance paper due (students also have option to hand in earlier if they choose to) (Due 2/4 at noon). |
| 2/5/2019 | Tue | 12:30-3 | Return to ritual | Bell Ch 8 |  |
| 2/6/2019 | Wed | No class (take home exam) |  |  | Final paper due at noon |

Course Expectations:

**Academic Honesty:** Cornell College expects all members of the Cornell community to act with academic integrity. An important aspect of academic integrity is respecting the work of others. A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is his or her work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College’s requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. The procedures regarding how the College deals with cases of academic dishonesty appear in The Compass, our student handbook, under the heading, “Academic Policies-Honesty in Academic Work.”

**Additional Resources:** I encourage you to utilize the services of Meghan Yamanishi, Social Sciences Librarian, Laura Farmer, Writing Consultant, and the Academic Media Studio. These professionals and their departments can provide additional perspectives and guidance to help polish your research, writing, & presentation skills.

**Attendance and Participation**: It is essential that you keep up with the readings and attend class regularly. Excessive absences will result in points deducted from your grade. Further, there will be in-class quizzes and writing assignments, some of which cannot be made up (unless you have discussed the matter with me beforehand).

**Classroom Behavior**: Throughout the semester, we will be covering topics that may be controversial and inspire heated debates. It’s important to remember that everyone in this class has a right to be heard, even if you disagree with what they’re saying. Treat your classmates with the same respect and courtesy that you expect from them, and together we can explore these important and difficult issues.

**Course Accommodations:** Cornell College is committed to providing equal educational opportunities to all students. College Policy regarding students with disabilities: Students who need accommodations for learning disabilities must provide documentation from a professional qualified to diagnose learning disabilities. For more information see:

<http://www.cornellcollege.edu/academic-support-andadvising/disabilities/documentation/index.shtml>

-Students requesting services may schedule a meeting with the disabilities service coordinator as early as possible to discuss their needs and develop an individualized accommodation plan. Ideally, this meeting would take place well before the start of classes.

-At the beginning of each course, the student must notify the instructor within the first three days of the term of any accommodations needed for the duration of the course.

**Course communication**: The main communication tools for the class are the Moodle site and email. Please make a point of checking these regularly for updates and/or changes to assignments. The best way to reach me is after class, via email or by making an appointment.

**Electronics**: All electronic devices need to be used in a way that is not disturbing or distracting. This means that all devices should be turned off or silenced during class, including cell phones. While I am willing to allow the use of laptops and tablets to take notes during class, I reserve the right to ask you to put them away if they seem to be an excessive distraction to you or anyone else. (Remember that students sitting beside or behind you can likely see your screen.) Common distractions include texting and checking Facebook or other social media; avoid doing these during class.

**Formatting for Assignments:** Please type your papers, which should be double-spaced, with standard margins (1 in.) and fonts (12 point Times New Roman). Most take-home written work must be uploaded to Moodle, however there may be additional you will need to submit in hard copy. In an effort to reduce the amount of paper we generate for the course, I will be providing some feedback electronically. Do not send me work via email unless I have specifically given permission. (Emails with attachments too often end up in my spam folder.) If you send files in formats I can’t easily open, I will send them back to you for reformatting.

**Late or Missing Work**: I will not accept late papers. If you know you will be absent when something is due, you must speak to me or email me in advance. If you miss a scheduled presentation or are absent when an assignment is due, do not just assume that you will be able to make it up or turn it in late for full credit. Keep in mind that we all have unforeseen circumstances in our lives, so do not wait until the last minute to complete your assignments.

**15-Day Drop Policy:** Per the academic catalog, a 15-day drop may be available to those students who have made, in the opinion of the instructor, a determined effort to learn the material, complete the work, comply with the attendance policy, and participate in the class. Students may relinquish their right to a 15-day drop if they fail to turn in any assignments, come unprepared to class or have excessive absences.